

## Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-14

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

USSAGE NAKHON PHANOM

CINCPAC HONOLULU

COGARD POLAD

XMT AMEMBASSY SUVA

UNCLAS STATE 249321

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT: DECEMBER 21 EA PRESS SUMMARY

INDOCHINA

1. EXCEPT FOR WP WHICH MADE ONLY PASSING REFERENCE  
IN CONTEXT OF ME NEGOTIATIONS, ALL PAPERS COVERED  
YESTERDAY'S HAK-THO CONFRONTATION. SEVERAL QUOTED  
"INFORMANTS" OR US OFFICIALS TO EFFECT THAT BOTH  
HAD EXCHANGED COMPLAINTS OF C-F VIOLATIONS AND  
(AS ANNOUNCED) AGREED TO KEEP IN TOUCH, BUT NO  
PROGRESS HAD BEEN EXPECTED AND -- ACCORDING NYT'S  
FLORA LEWIS, NONE MADE. NYDN'S VALERY SIMPLY  
SAID THEY FAILED TO REACH AN AGREEMENT THAT WOULD  
STOP THE FIGHTING. LEWIS REPORTED THAT WHILE  
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THO SAID HE WOULD REMAIN IN PARIS A FEW DAYS,  
US SOURCES SAID NO FURTHER MEETINGS NOW PLANNED.  
THESE SOURCES SAID THAT IN RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS  
OF NO PROGRESS TOWARDS POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, HAK

TOOK POSITION THAT US HAD WITHDRAWN POLITICALLY AS WELL AS MILITARILY AND WAS NOT "INTO THAT MESS" BETWEEN SAIGON AND THE VC. VALERY'S US SOURCES ALSO REPORTED THO PRESSED FOR REVIVAL OF TALKS ON RECONSTRUCTION AID FOR NVN. LEWIS REPORTS AMBASSADOR MARTIN FLEW TO PARIS FOR TALKS BUT ALSO NOTES THAT FOR HALF AN HOUR HAK AND THO SENT AWAY ALL AIDES EXCEPT THEIR INTERPRETERS.

2. COMMUNISTS TIGHTEN GRIP ON STRATEGIC HIGHWAYS NEAR SAIGON AND LAUNCH SERIES OF ATTACKS ACROSS SVN (WP; AP, NYDN). GOVT SPOKESMEN SPEAK OF HIGH POINT OF ACTIVITY AND ASSERT THAT C-F VIOLATIONS ROSE TO 184 IN 30 HOURS ENDING DEC. 20.

3. CSM'S TRUDY RUBIN MENTIONS PLIGHT OF MAUREEN DUNN, WIFE OF ONE OF 1,158 MIA'S. DESPITE C-F PROVISIONS FOR GATHERING INFO ON THEIR FATE, HANOI AND NLF HAVE GIVEN OUT PRACTICALLY NO NEW FACTS, AND US OFFICIALS ADMIT US HAS SCANT LEVERAGE. MEANWHILE, FAMILIES, MOST OF WHOM SEEK ONLY DETAILS OF MISSING LOVED ONES, FEEL FORGOTTEN IN WAKE OF POW'S RETURN. US PROPOSALS FOR RETURN OF REMAINS OF 23 AMERICANS BURIED IN HANOI HAVE BEEN REJECTED BY NVN.

4. CSM'S SOUTHERLAND FOLLOWS HIS COLLEAGUES IN REPORTING DIGGING OF ANTI-TANK TRENCHES NORTH OF SAIGON. NOTING THAT TRENCHES NOT EXPECTED TO STOP MANY TANKS, CITES GVN OFFICIALS AS SAYING THAT THEY ARE AS MUCH FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL PURPOSES AS ANYTHING ELSE, TO GET CIVILIAN POPULATION INVOLVED AND TO BOLSTER MORALE. OPINION DIVIDED AMONG INTELLIGENCE SOURCES REGARDING NVN INTENTIONS ON MAJOR OFFENSIVE SINCE ONE OF MOST DIFFICULT FACTORS TO ASSESS IS NVN'S READING OF PRES NIXON'S CURRENT WEAKNESSES. BUT FEW US AND VIET OFFICIALS DOUBT THAT WAR WILL UNCLASSIFIED

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CONTINUE. VIEW FROM SAIGON IS THAT NO DRAMATIC RESULTS CAN BE EXPECTED FROM HAK-THO MEETING.

5. GOVT FORCES CAME UNDER ATTACK IN CAMBODIA AT DAUN SAUR PAGODA, 10 MILES SE OF PP. DELAYED REPORTS ALSO DISCLOSE THAT INSURGENTS CUT OFF FOUR OUTPOSTS NINE MILES FROM PP DEC. 17 (WP).

6. NYT REPORTS RECEIVING SIHANOUK CABLE FROM CANTON WEDNESDAY TAKING ISSUE WITH ITS DEC. 10 REPORT THAT KR "INSURGENCY SEEMS INCREASINGLY REMOTE" FROM HIM. PRINCE ACKNOWLEDGED HE HAD ONCE SPOKEN SIMILARLY BUT HE HAD RECEIVED MESSAGE FROM INSURGENT LEADERSHIP

IN CAMBODIA AFFIRMING "ENERGETICALLY ITS CONFIDENCE, ITS AFFECTION EVEN, AND INSISTED THAT I REMAIN THE UNCONTESTED LEADER OF ANTI-IMPERIALIST CAMBODIA".

7. AFP REPORTS THAT TEAM OF 20 CHINAT PILOTS RECENTLY RECRUITED BY KAF BEGAN FLYING DC-3 TRANSPORTS THIS WEEK. CAMBODIAN PILOTS SAY THEY WILL NOT BE ON COMBAT MISSIONS. CHINESE NOT VISIBLE IN PP AND

ARE BELIEVED LIVING IN FORMER USAF QUARTERS. CHINESE PILOTS ENABLE KAF TO USE ALL TRAINED PERSONNEL FOR COMBAT MISSIONS; KHMER PILOTS DISPLEASED BECAUSE THEY ARE SHUT OFF FROM LUCRATIVE COMMERCIAL TRANSPORT AND ARE TRYING TO EARN A BIT "MOONLIGHTING" ON THE SIDE (NYT).

IN LAOS, RLG ANNOUNCED DECISION TO SEEK IMMEDIATE REACTIVATION OF ICC FOLLOWING SUDDEN RASH OF ALLEGED COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF C-F DURING PAST WEEKS (AP NYDN). NYT REPORTS GODLEY NOMINATION TO LEBANON; GIVES BACKGROUND OF EARLIER NOMINATION TO BE EA ASST. SEC.

9. NYT'S CLARITY IN VIENTIANE REPORTS INTERVIEW WITH SOUVANNA PHOUMA, WHO SAID HAK-THO TALKS COULD LEAD TO IMMINENT FORMATION OF RLG-PL COALITION GOVT AS EARLY AS JANUARY, AND SUGGESTED THAT PL WAS AWAITING RESULTS OF MEETING BEFORE TAKING FINAL UNCLASSIFIED

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STEPS TO FORM COALITION. HE SAID IT WAS "UNTHINKABLE" THAT EITHER RLG OR PL WOULD TRY TO SEIZE POWER BY FORCE ONCE COALITION WAS ESTABLISHED, AND DENIED THAT HIS SIDE HAD MADE EXCESSIVE CONCESSIONS TO PL IN NEGOTS. HE SAID IF HAK AND THO ARRIVE AT AN UNDERSTANDING ON QUESTION OF VN, PL WOULD ACCEPT FORMATION OF GOVT, ADDING "WE ARE READY." HE SAID THAT THERE WERE 50,000 TO 60,000 NVN TROOPS IN LAOS AND THOUGHT HANOI WOULD HONOR PEACE AGREEMENT AND LEAVE WITHIN 60 DAYS OF FORMATION OF NEW GOVT. PRINCE DISCLOSED INTENTION TO VISIT HANOI, MOSCOW AND PEKING "AS SOON AS I AM ABLE" AFTER CREATION OF COALITION, AND TO VISIT PRES NIXON AFTER OTHER TRIPS. ONE PURPOSE OF VISITS TO COMMUNIST CAPITALS WOULD BE TO ASK FOR AID IN REBUILDING ECONOMY.

ANZ

10. AMERICAN AIRLINES AND PAA AGREE, SUBJECT TO CAB APPROVAL, TO EXCHANGE OF ROUTES WHICH WOULD REMOVE AA FROM ANZ AND SOUTH PACIFIC. MOVE WOULD ELIMINATE DEFICIT PRODUCER FOR AA, STRENGTHEN PAA

PACIFIC RUNS, AND REDUCE IRRITANT TO GOA POSED  
BY TWO US LINES VS. QANTAS (JOC, WSJ).

11. LAT'S LAMB (DEC. 20) IN SYDNEY OBSERVES AUSSIES  
SURVIVING ENERGY CRISIS IN "QUITE COMFORTABLE FASHION,"  
WITH FAVORABLE TANKER SCHEDULES IN MONTHS AHEAD  
AND SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE SUMMER BEGINNING. BUT  
GOOD LIFE MAY NOT LAST LONG BECAUSE ALP GOVT REMOVED

TAX INCENTIVES FOR MINERAL EXPLORATION LAST MAY;  
AND CHAUVINISTIC APPROACH TOWARD MINING DISCOURAGES  
FOREIGN CAPITAL AND TECHNOLOGY FOR MAJOR EXPLORATION  
PROJECTS. AT LEAST THREE INTERNATIONAL OIL COMPANIES  
ARE KNOWN TO HAVE STOPPED DRILLING FOR OIL IN AUSTRALIA  
THIS YEAR, AND SEVERAL AUSSIE COMPANIES MOVED SEARCH  
FROM LOCAL TO SEA WATERS.

HONG KONG  
UNCLASSIFIED

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12. AP REPORTS HK SHIPBREAKING INDUSTRY IS DYING  
BECAUSE OF SPIRALLING LABOR COSTS AND TAIWAN COMPETITION  
(SUN).

INDONESIA

13. WP REPORTS THAT USSR-INDONESIA AGREE TO EXCHANGE  
CULTURAL GROUPS AND INTENSIFY ECON TIES, AS DISCLOSED  
BY USSR CULTURAL MINISTER AFTER MEETING WITH SUHARTO.

JAPAN

14. AFP TOKYO QUOTES MIN OF TRANSPORT AS SAYING  
THAT JAL, TOA DOMESTIC AIRWAYS, AND ANA HAVE BEEN  
DIRECTED TO HALVE THEIR PURCHASE OF PASSENGER AIRCRAFT  
FOR NEXT YEAR AS INFLATION CONTROL MEASURE. AIRLINES  
HAD PLANNED TO ACQUIRE SIX 747S, FOUR LOCKHEED 1011S,  
AND SIX DC-9S NEXT YEAR.

15. JOC'S CULLISON IN TOKYO REPORTS THAT DOCK WORKERS  
FAILED TO REACH CONTRACT AGREEMENT BUT AGREED WITH  
MANAGEMENT TO RESUME TALKS ON OR AFTER JAN. 10.  
MEANWHILE, WORKERS WILL REMAIN ON JOB. LAT (DEC.  
20) REPORTS LA HARBOR COMMISSION PLANNING LONG PROMOTION  
MISSION TO JAPAN BEGINNING JAN. 24.

16. , JOC'S CULLISON REPORTS THAT DECLINING JAPANESE  
EXPORTS OF SEMI-PROCESSED GOODS BROUGHT ABOUT BY  
ENERGY CRISIS IS SERIOUSLY INJURING FIRMS IN ASIAN  
NATIONS WHO RELY ON THESE MATERIALS FOR THEIR OWN  
MANUFACTURING- GAIMUSHO OFFICIALS SAYS THEIR REPS  
IN 14 ASIAN COUNTRIES HAVE REPORTED THAT MAJORITY

OF THESE NATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE COMPLAINING THEIR FIRMS BADLY AFFECTED BY DECREASES IN SHIPMENTS OF JAPANESE SYNTHETIC TEXTILES. HARDEST HIT BY CURTAILMENTS OF RAW MATERIAL FOR PRODUCING PLASTICS ARE S KOREA, HK, MALAYSIA, SINGAPORE, INDONESIA, AND PHILS. JAPANESE FIRMS ALSO HAVE BEEN REDUCING SHIPMENTS

OF CHEMICAL FERTILIZERS TO INDONESIA, PHILS AND UNCLASSIFIED

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SRI LANKA.

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

17. CHITRIB VIEWS AS COURAGEOUS RECENT PROTESTS IN S KOREA AGAINST PARK TOTALITARIAN MEASURES AND DEMANDS FOR RESTORATION OF FULL DEMOCRACY; COURAGE DOUBTLESS FORTIFIED BY SUPPORT OF GROWING PUBLIC OPINION. PARK FAILED TO CONVINCE GREAT MANY AMERICANS (NOT TO MENTION JAPANESE) THAT HIS REPRESSIVE MEASURES WERE NECESSARY FOR ROK SECURITY RATHER THAN FOR HIS OWN POLITICAL SURVIVAL. MANY OF HIS OWN PEOPLE REMAIN UNCONVINCED AS WELL.

18. LAT (DEC. 19) REFERS TO THO-HAK MEETING, COMMENTING THAT LATTER'S ROLE MUST BE THAT OF CONSTRUCTIVE NEGOTIATOR AND PACIFIER, NO LONGER THAT OF BELLIGERENT. NOTING ESCALATION OF KILLING SINCE C-F, LAT SAYS NO POLITICAL FORCE IS BLAMELESS, INCLUDING GREAT POWERS. "EVEN THE GREAT POWERS, WHICH LENT THEIR AUTHORITY TO THE AGREEMENT, MAY BE BENDING THE SPIRIT IF NOT THE LETTER OF THE ACCORDS." FINDS EXPLANATION OF MISSION THAT COST LIFE OF US OFFICER LAST WEEKEND "NOT ENTIRELY SATISFACTORY"; TRACING SEVEN-YEAR-OLD HELICOPTER CRASHES WOULD HARDLY APPEAR TO BE JUSTIFICATION FOR EXPOSING US SOLDIERS TO SUCH RISKS. AMERICANS, WHO HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY WANT THEIR SOLDIERS OUT, CAN ONLY BE PERPLEXED THAT SOME ARE STILL IN.

19. JOE ALSOP SAYS GREAT WINTER OFFENSIVE BY HANOI HIGHLY POSSIBLE. THINKS GVN WOULD HAVE GOOD CHANCE OF REPELLING OFFENSIVE BUT FOR TWO THINGS: THOSE IN CONGRESS WHO POSITIVELY HANKER FOR AN AMERICAN DEFEAT IN VN HAVE TIED THE PRESIDENT'S HAND IN EVERY POSSIBLE MILITARY WAY. AND THEY HAVE FURTHER MADE IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR US TO HELP SVN TO HELP THEMSELVES. AMERICANS ARE UNLIKELY TO ENJOY THE HARD FACT OF FINAL DEFEAT IN WAR THAT HAS COST SO MUCH. IF DEFEAT COMES, IT WILL ADD TO THE POLITICAL AIR POLLUTION WE ARE NOW SUFFERING (WP). UNCLASSIFIED

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PHILIPPINES

20. AP MANILA (SUN) REPORTS THAT JESUIT GROUP IN PHILS HAS ACCEPTED \$1,992,000 US GRANT TO PROMOTE BIRTH CONTROL IN EA. PROJECT'S EMPHASIS WILL BE "TO LEGITIMIZE THE INVOLVEMENT OF CATHOLICS IN FAMILY

PLANNING PROGRAMS."

THAILAND

21. IN ELECTION OF NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, 78 PERCENT OF NEW MEMBERS ARE FROM BANGKOK, SINKING HOPES OF RURAL DELEGATES FOR STRONG VOICE IN LEGISLATIVE BODY. TOP VOTE-GETTER WAS KUKRIT PRAMOJ, PUBLISHER OF SIAM RATH. OTHER WINNERS INCLUDED THANOM'S BROTHER SA-NGA, FORMER FM THANAT KHOMAN, AND DR. PUEY UNGPAKORN.  
RUSH

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